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RECORD OF NEGRO FOLK-LORE.

AFRICA AND AMERICA. In his paper on "The Fallacy of the 'Selected Group' in the Discussion of the Negro Question," in the "Southern Workman" (vol. xxxii. pp. 520-526) for November, 1903, Mr. Talcott Williams points out the unfairness of comparing the slave negroes of America, born of the pestilential swamp of the Congo, — the least favorable of all his African environments, as his progress elsewhere in that continent shows, — with the group of Anglo-Saxons resident in and acclimated to the New World. We ought rather to be surprised at what the negro has done in America than at what he has failed to do.

ALABAMA FOLK-LORE. With this title appears an article in the "Southern Workman" (vol. xxxiii. pp. 49-52) for January, 1904, containing three brief tales, — Why the buzzard has a red head, how the guinea-hen got ahead of the rabbit, brer rabbit and brer fox, 10 proverbs, and some 30 "signs." The material was collected at Calhoun, Ala., and the items are given "exactly as they have been handed down by traditions." The editors state that "the second story is a variant of one published by Joel Chandler Harris, and the third is a combination of three well-known tales." Some of the proverbs and signs show white influence. — "In Old Alabama" (N. Y., 1903), by Anne Hobson, contains some good folk-lore material. According to a reviewer in the "Southern Workman" (vol. xxxii. p. 565), "the untutored Negro's weird imagination, credulity, simplicity, and superstition are all there." Miss Hobson's book, containing 10 dialect stories and many plantation songs, "is said by some to be the most accurate delineation of Negro character since *Uncle Remus*." The narrator of the tales is "Miss Mouse."

EDUCATION. In the "Southern Workman" (vol. xxxii. p. 500) for October, 1903, G. S. Dickerman has an interesting article on "Old-Time Negro Education in the South." In Charleston "public sentiment forbade them [free negroes] to carry a cane or to ride in a carriage." It would seem that a number of free negroes used to hold slaves of their own race. Rev. John Chairs, a Presbyterian minister, educated at Washington College (and a negro), "taught for many years a classical school for white boys in North Carolina, out of which came a number of eminent men."

FEAR OF FIRE. The other day the compiler of these notes heard an educated negro from the South declare that his people were very much afraid of fire, and that he himself had never got up courage enough to report for lessons in blacksmithing for the reason that the sight of the sparks flying about and the other incidentals of the forge scared him too much.

GHOSTS. In the "Southern Workman" (vol. xxxii. p. 506) is published "Uncle Si'ah and the Ghosts," which, an editorial note informs us, is "a folk-lore story written as a class exercise by Laura Randolph, a member of the Junior class at Hampton Institute."

HALLUCINATIONS. In the "Archives d'Anthropologie Criminelle" for September and November, 1903, Dr. Nina-Rodrigues has an article on "La paraonia chez les Nègres," in which he discusses the prevalence of paranoia among Brazilian negroes. From a brief résumé by Havelock Ellis (J. Ment. Science, vol. 1. p. 169), it appears that "there is thus a special prevalence of motor and psychomotor hallucinations, and the author associates this with the normal prevalence of the verbal motor type in negroes, as shown by the frequency with which they talk aloud to themselves." A thoroughly systematized and chronic delusion, "such as is fairly common among whites, is extremely rare, in the opinion of all Brazilian alienists, and when found, the author asserts, always indicates either that the subject belongs to one of the higher African races, or else that he has a trace of white blood." Moreover, the interesting fact is revealed that "the subject of the delusion is nearly always connected with sorcery." Dr. Nina-Rodrigues holds that "this is not due to atavism," but "an underlying belief in sorcery is still common to most negroes, though it is covered by a thin veneer of civilization."

HYPNOTISM AND SUGGESTION. The second and much enlarged edition of Dr. Otto Stoll's "Suggestion und Hypnotismus in der Völkerpsychologie" (Leipzig, 1904, pp. x. 738) treats at considerable length of these facts among the peoples of Africa, to whom a whole chapter (pp. 273-298) is devoted. Autosuggestive "possession" in Loango, the "werlions" of South Africa, the "magic forest" of West Africa for youths, etc., are touched upon. At pages 188-190 is described the *capoeiragem*, or murder mania of the negroes of Brazil, after the account of von Tschudi. The *capoeiras* formed a secret society, whose numbers ran amuck on Sundays, holidays, etc. They began by butting each other with their heads. Most of their killing was done with long needles and awls. According to von Tschudi, the basis of the murder-frenzy of these negroes was religious, and he thought the custom was of African origin, coming over with the slaves. Dr. Stoll considers the question of African origin doubtful. It seems unnecessary to assume the existence of an African mystic secret society. That these outbreaks occur generally on Sundays and holidays may be due simply to the fact that the blacks, like the whites, were accustomed to greater liberties on those occasions. The account of von Tschudi was published in 1860.

INDIAN "MEDICINE MAN" AND NEGRO "CONJURE MAN." In his article on "Precolumbian West Indian Amulets" (Amer. Anthr.,

n. s. vol. v. pp. 679-691), Dr. J. Walter Fewkes observes (p. 690) : "Many instances of the use of charms and amulets still survive in the practices of the negro 'conjure men' of Porto Rico, but it is difficult to distinguish those of Indian from those of African descent." The methods of the negro "conjurer man" and the old *boii* of the pre-Columbian natives of the Antilles are, he thinks, much the same, adding, on this point : "To what extent the West Indian conjure man of to-day has been influenced by aboriginal sorcery is not now known, but the subject is well worthy of study, and a rich field for research awaits the folk-lorist in Santo Domingo and Porto Rico."

NAME. In the "Southern Workman" (vol. xxxiii. pp. 33-36) for January, 1904, Fannie Barrier Williams discusses the subject, "Do we need another Name?" The author agrees with Professor DuBois that *Negro* is a great deal better than *Afro-American*, while *colored* is a mere term of convenience.

SACRIFICES. Mr. J. B. Andrews's account of the sacrifices of fowls at the "Springs of the Ginns," near Algiers, by the Soudanese negroes of that region, contained in his "Les Fontaines des Génies" (Alger, 1903), will be of value for the comparative study of Negro folk-lore. The pamphlet is noticed more at length elsewhere in this Journal. The contact of Islamism and Negro fetishism in Algeria may throw light on some of the phenomena of the contacts of the Negro with Catholicism and Protestantism in various regions of the New World.

A. F. C.